National Drought Policy

186. SHRI C. RAMACHANDRAIAH: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government propose to formulate a 'National Drought Policy in view of successive droughts in several parts of the country;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI KANTILAL BHURIA): (a) to (c) Government has decided to entrust the task of preparing a "Drought Manual" to the National Institute of Disaster Management which shall provide suggestive guidelines to States to prepare for and deal with droughts, including successive droughts.

MSP for Rabi crops

187. SHRI KARNENDU BHATTACHARJEE: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that this year Government have announced the Minimum Support Price (MSP) for Rabi crops well before the arrival of farm produce in the market; and

(b) if so, the reasons for such departure from usual practice of announcing the MSP after the arrival of crops in the market?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI KANTILAL BHURIA): (a) and (b) As the purpose of MSPs is to give price signal to farmers with regard to choice of crops, every effort is made to expedite announcement of MSPs. While, the MSPs of Rabi crops of 2002-03 season to be marketed in 2003-04 (April-March) were announced on 13th February, 2003, the MSPs of Rabi crops of 2003-04 season to be marketed in 2004-05 (April-March) were announced on 19th December, 2003 and the MSPs of Rabi crops of 2004-05 seasons to be marketed in 2005-06 (April-March) have been announced on 3rd November, 2004. Thus, the endeavour of the Government has been to reduce the delay between the commencement of the sowing season of Rabi crops and the announcement of the MSP of Rabi crops.